

media release

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New consortium prepares for Australia's regenerative medicine future

AusBiotech will lead a consortium of seven partners as the Australian regenerative medicine (RM) industry prepares to thrive and drive benefits to Australia's economy and the health of its people, after it received funding through MTPConnect's Project Fund Program.

The project will identify and establish a national RM sector 'catalyst' collaboration body, and address priority action areas including: workforce capabilities, collaboration, funding, regulation and policy infrastructure, and Australian manufacturing capability.

The seven consortium partners hold extensive insight and experience in the life science and regenerative medicines landscape in Australia: AusBiotech, Medicines Australia, Cell Therapies Pty Ltd, Novartis Pharmaceuticals Australia Pty Ltd, Biointelect Pty Ltd, Research Strategies Australia, and MTPConnect. The partners will match the funding from MTPConnect to deliver the project.

The 12-month project will build on Australia's expertise and achievements in the RM industry - an emerging area of health technology that targets the body's own regenerative capabilities. RM includes gene therapies, cell therapies (such as CAR-T), and tissue-engineered products intended to regenerate or replace injured, diseased, or defective cells, tissues, or organs to restore or establish function and structure.

Australia has a strong and active RM industry eco-system with internationally-recognised basic and translational research, clinical trials framework and clinical centres, with more than 30 companies in Australia developing products and more than 30 clinical trials in progress.

Globally, the sector has more than 1,000 clinical trials in progress, and attracted USD \$9.8 billion in financing in 2019 alone. Global therapeutics companies are turning their attention to the RM sector and we are seeing more gene and cell therapies being brought to Australia for patient access.

The significance and need for this project was highlighted in a national, sector-wide report that assessed the current state of the Australian RM sector and made recommendations on the priorities and goals, see [*Regenerative medicine: Opportunities for Australia \(MTPConnect, LEK, 2018\)*](#).

Major outcomes of the project include:

- A researched, strategic roadmap for the RM sector's development in Australia, including sub-reports on skill and talent specific to the sector; determining a plan to attract patient venture capital investment and the role of Australian biotech companies partnering with global companies; and case studies;



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- Determining a sustainable funding and model structure for an RM sector 'catalyst' collaboration body;
- A regulatory white paper;
- Establishing annual data points and information resources to: map/benchmark GMP manufacturing capability and capacity; establish a model for an annual clinical trial database; and capture investments in Australian RM;
- Mapping the pathway for a typical product from early research to market, and patients receiving a therapy; and
- Mapping the global pipeline of gene and cell therapy products on the horizon.

The new consortium project will receive \$300,000 funding through MTPConnect's [Growth Centre Project Fund Program](#), an Australian Government initiative supported by the Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources. Consortia members are providing \$300,000 in matched funding. It is a competitive matched funding program that aims to invest in ideas to boost the innovation, productivity and competitiveness of Australia's MTP sector.

- QUOTES FROM CONSORTIUM -

AusBiotech CEO, Lorraine Chiroiu said: "AusBiotech is delighted to be joining with a high-quality consortium of organisations to further build the foundations for regenerative medicine in Australia.

"The potential health benefits of a surging regenerative medicine sector, were until quite recently more likely to be considered science fiction than reality, but the evidence is mounting; the outcomes stunning – and the excitement for the sector's future is too good to ignore.

"However, Australia is underprepared to capitalise on the opportunities gene and cell therapies can deliver. This project will bring together, for the first time, the entire ecosystem, and focus our efforts for best effect. From SME to multinational, investor to manufacturer, patient to employee, this project will prepare us for the road ahead."

Cell Therapies Pty Ltd CEO, Dawn Driscoll, said, "Australia's regenerative medicine ecosystem has so many positive attributes and so much going for it: from excellent basic research through to an innovative commercial scene, and underpinned by a robust and rational regulatory framework. Now is absolutely the right time for AusBiotech to oversee a Consortium to move this industry forward and maximize the many opportunities regenerative medicine presents. I am thrilled to be part of it, and look forward to contributing to the further expansion of an industry that can do so much for so many patients in need."

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About AusBiotech

AusBiotech is Australia's biotechnology organisation, working on behalf of members for more than 30 years to provide representation and services to promote the global growth of Australian biotechnology. AusBiotech is the voice of a well-connected network of over 3,000 members in the life sciences, including therapeutics, medical technology (devices and diagnostics), food technology and agricultural sectors.

About Biointelect

Biointelect provides a range of services for biopharmaceutical and medical device companies seeking to commercialise new technologies globally. We conduct detailed market evaluations and we define optimum clinical, regulatory, reimbursement and market-entry strategies.

About Cell Therapies

Cell Therapies Pty Ltd (CTPL) is an Australian-based, globally-active commercial contract development and manufacturing company, specialising in cell therapy, gene therapy, regenerative medicine, and cellular immunotherapy products. A leader in this groundbreaking field, our expert team and world-class facilities have been developing and manufacturing cutting edge treatments for cancer and rare diseases on behalf of local and international clients for more than 15 years.

About Medicines Australia

Medicines Australia represents the discovery-driven pharmaceutical industry in Australia. Our member companies invent, manufacture and supply innovative medicines and vaccines to the Australian community, which keeps Australians out of hospitals, prevents disease and play a pivotal role in ensuring a productive and healthy community. Medicines Australia's mission is to drive the creation and development of a predictable environment for the continued, sustainable growth of the innovative and researchbased prescription medicines industry.

About MTPConnect

MTPConnect was formed in December 2015 as part of the Federal Government's Industry Growth Centres Initiative. It aims to accelerate the rate of growth of the medical technologies, biotechnologies and pharmaceuticals sector to increase commercialisation, collaboration and establish Australia as an Asia-Pacific hub for MTP companies.

About Novartis Australia and New Zealand

Novartis is the largest Australian medicines company improving the lives of more than 2.8 million patients across Australia and New Zealand. From generics to gene therapy, we are committed to accelerating patient access to life saving treatments. We are reimagining medicine by using innovative science and technology to address challenging healthcare issues and our rich pipeline has 200+ projects in development and an industry leading clinical trial footprint in Australia. Our unbossed, curious and inspired culture unites our 700 employees, it is what unleashes the power of our people and is at the heart of the work we do each day.

About Research Strategies Australia

Research Strategies Australia is a consulting firm with the mission of maximising the benefits of publicly funded research. We work with government, universities non-profits and the private sector to plan, manage and monitor research investments.